abatement of river Yamuna in Delhi out of their plan funds.Under this component, the Government of NCT of Delhi has constructed sewage treatment plants at 17 locations with appurtenant works.The expenditure on these works during the Ninth Plan was Rs.617 crore and outlay for the year 2002-03 is Rs. 212 crore. The present installed capacity of sewage treatment in Delhi is 2200 mid which also includes 30 mid capacity created under Yamuna Action Plan (Phase-I) of Government. Apart from installation of sewage treatment plants, Government of NCT of Delhi has also taken up construction of 15 numbers of common effluent treatment plants to address the problems of industrial pollution from 21 industrial estates in Delhi.

A proposal for abatement of pollution of river Yamuna under YAP Phase-II has been prepared at an estimated cost of Rs. 2018 crore. This proposal has been posed for funding to Japan Bank of International Cooperation in March, 2002.

Upgradation of Regional Engineering Colleges

*193. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have recently upgraded some Regional Engineering Colleges (RECs) as National Institute of Technology (NITs);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the criteria on which the upgradation has been approved; and

(d) whether any agency has been put in place to monitor the functioning of these NITs and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (d) To strengthen the Regional Engineering Colleges system, Government of India constituted a High Powered Review Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. R.A. Mashelkar. The High Powered Committee recommended that the management of the Regional Engineering colleges (RECs) be restructured, their names be changed and they may be given the Deemed to be University status.On the basis of the recommendations of the Review Committee and the Empowered Committee appointed by the Government of India, in principle decision was taken to convert the RECs into National Institute of Technology

(NITs) and State Government were requested to give their consent for the proposed changes. Out of 17 RECs, in the first phase RECs situated at Allahabad, Bhopal, Calicut, Hamirpur, Jaipur, Nagpur, Kurukshetra, Rourkela, Silchar and Surathkal were convered into National Institutes of Technology because the concerned State Governments agreed to change the management structure of the Concerned RECs. This initiative will translate into enhanced funding for the new NITs and improved management of their affairs. This transformation will result in greater adminsitrative, academic and financial autonomy to the newly converted Institutes which, in turn, is expected to enhance their level of education. After concurrence of the concerned State Governments is received, the remaining RECs shall also be converted into NITs. The new NITs will be able to impart, in the near future, technical education of comparable quality to nearly 7000 aspirants as is being provided by other nationals level institutions.These NITs shall be managed by their Board of Governors. In additions to that, Council of National Institute of Technology shall coordinate the activities of all the NITs.

Forests cover in North-Eastern States

*194. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONEMNT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of forest cover in Assam and in other North-Eastern States;

(b) what are the reasons for not taking into account the tea gardens in Assam, full of trees, as forest cover;

(c) the reasons for which the people in that State, settled in the forest areas even before Independenance, are being evicted; and

(d) whether his Ministry would suggest the Assam Government to rehabilitate such evicted people?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) According to the State of Forests Report 1999, the percentage of forest cover in Assam and in other North-Eastern States with respect to geographical area is as under:

(i)	Assam	30.20%
(ii)	Arunachal Pradesh	82.21%
(iii)	Manipur	77.86%